

July 15, 1999

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Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

RE: Docket #98N-1038, "Irradiation in the production, processing and handling of food"

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to voice my opinion on the proposed changes in labeling for irradiated foods. I am a licensed home economist and am writing as such as well as as a concerned consumer. After reading through the information posted by you on the Internet, I decided to write and share my thoughts on labeling.

First of all, I am against making labeling of irradiation as a food treatment any less obvious than it already is. It is my opinion that the majority of consumers do not recognize the logo that is to indicate irradiation; I do not recognize it myself. Further, I have not noticed any kind of prominent indication by label of irradiation on the foods that I purchase. Certainly, I will begin to look more closely, but to this point, I would not say that it is obvious.

As a home economist and consumer of all kinds of food products, I believe that when I purchase a product that is treated in a new way, I should have the right to know it. I also believe that the FDA has the responsibility to clearly and in an unbiased fashion, educate the American population as to just how irradiation is done and what the drawbacks and benefits to such a process might be. This would do more to help us determine for ourselves whether we want to consume such products and be more responsible for our own decisions. When labels are inconspicuous or vague, such as changing terminology to make irradiation look like a cousin to pasteurization, consumers are misled.

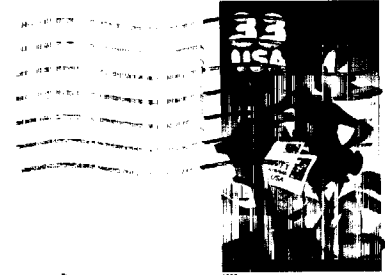
We want to be able to make educated decisions. Please keep the treatment of foods by irradiation conspicuous and clear.

Sincerely,

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